

“Under My Wing” An ESSEX SMART Sailor Program

BACKGROUND

A sailor's three-year tour aboard the ESSEX should be one filled with tremendous challenges, excitement, fun, valuable experiences gained, accomplishments made, lifelong friendships developed, and dreams fulfilled.

Many sailors, however, depart the ESSEX not having reached their full potential and leave the ship feeling frustrated, lost, angry and perhaps eager to leave the Navy.

Integration of the “Under My Wing” program into the institutional culture of the ESSEX will enable our young men and women to develop

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**In concert with the CNO’s
“*Manpower*” priority, the “Under
My Wing” program will also
enhance our retention efforts and
will enable the Navy to keep top
quality sailors in the Fleet.**

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DISCUSSION

ASSUMPTIONS:

- a. Every sailor onboard ESSEX has the potential to be a 5.0 sailor.
- b. The ESSEX has an abundance of top quality leaders who will be willing to serve as Mentors and give a little of their time and energy to help a fellow sailor reach his/her potential.
- c. Every khaki is a potential stakeholder in the program.
- d. Participation in the “Under My Wing” program will benefit both Protégé and Mentor.

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Program Concept:

- a. This is not a typical mentorship program focused on only career development.
- b. “Under My Wing” is the elective component of the ESSEX SMART Sailor program.
- c. The goal of “Under My Wing” is to develop our young men and women into mature, accomplished, goal-oriented, focused and productive sailors—sailors who are mentally and physically prepared to accomplish the mission and succeed in the Navy.

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Program Implementation:

- a. Buy-In from the Khaki community is vital to program success.
- b. Participation in the program is voluntary. However, the CO and XO have the option of requiring participation in the program for sailors who have the potential of becoming disciplinary problems onboard ship.
- c. The Mentor and Protégé will enter into a written contract that will define desired outcomes (goals). Ideally, the relationship will continue for at least six months. A minimum of two hours of contact each week will be encouraged.
- d. The Mentor will have the ability to access resources from all SMART Sailor components to develop his/her protégé.

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- e. At the six month point, both Mentor and Protégé will determine whether the relationship is to continue or if it will be terminated. Continuance or termination will be based on attainment of the contractual goal(s).
- f. Flexibility will be the byword for the program. The Mentor and Protégé will be afforded flexibility in choosing the venue for interaction and coaching. (Fleet Gym, Nimitz Park, base library, Food Court, off-base eateries, and office spaces aboard ship are a few examples of locations where effective mentoring can take place.)

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- g. In order for the program to be effective, there must be a “good fit” between Mentor and Protégé. The Protégé will have the option to “Opt Out” of the relationship and choose another mentor, if one is available, during the first 30 days of his/her participation. The Mentor will be provided constructive feedback as to why the Protégé decided to Opt Out.
- h. At the conclusion of the relationship, the Mentor and Protégé will be asked to complete a brief survey. Qualitative and quantitative data derived from surveys will enable the command to develop metrics that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the program over time.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Thoroughly brief the Khaki community on the “Under My Wing” program.
- b. Address all concerns. Ask for Buy-In and solicit Mentor support.
- c. Begin the program after the Change of Command between CAPT Berg and CAPT Evans. Launch Date will be 18 April 02.

USS ESSEX SMART Sailor Program

Lecture Component

- **Cultural SMARTS**
- **Spiritual SMARTS**
- **Financial SMARTS**
- **Career SMARTS**
- **Educational SMARTS**

Elective Component

“Under My Wing” Program

**Mentor and
Protégé based
coaching,
teaching, and
counseling.**

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Educational SMARTS

Potential Goals

- a. Earn an undergraduate degree.
- b. Earn a master’s degree.
- c. Establish a game plan for professional schooling (ex. medicine, law, psychology, dentistry, theology, and engineering).
- d. Earn an appointment to one of the service academies (ex. Annapolis, West Point, Air Force, King’s Point).

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Educational SMARTS

**Examples of Protégé
Questions**

1. How can I earn a college degree while we're underway?
2. Will the Navy help me pay for college courses?
3. How do I sign up for the SAT/GRE/GMAT/LSAT/MCAT ?
4. Does any of my Navy training count towards an associate's degree?

Mentor Intervention

1. Access educational resources at CFAS Navy Campus.
2. Become knowledgeable of Tuition Assistance policies.
3. Pick Navy Campus counselor's brain.
4. Walk the Protégé through the entire process.
5. Once the Protégé begins a course of study, the Mentor stays involved and connected.

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Career SMARTS

Potential Goals.

- a. Chart a course towards becoming a Helicopter Pilot.
- b. Chart a course towards becoming a Surface Warfare Officer.
- c. Earn a commission in the Medical Service Corps.
- d. Increase the probability of getting promoted during the next promotion cycle.

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Career SMARTS

**Examples of Protégé
Questions**

1. I’m not very good at math. Is flight school out of the question for me?
2. I want to go Nuclear. What courses should I take now?
3. I’d like to become a Navy JAG. What steps should I take to reach my goal?
4. I’d like to become a corpsman. How can I achieve this goal?

Mentor Intervention

1. Ideally, the Mentor will work in the field that interests the Protégé.
2. Access professionals who work in the field.
3. Pick their brain.
4. Walk the Protégé through the entire process.
5. Once the Protégé begins a plan of action, the Mentor stays involved and connected.